

TO: Jonas Minton
CC: Kamyar Guivetchi, Paul Dabbs, Lisa Buetler, Gina Bartlett
FROM: Bulletin 160 agricultural caucus*
DATE: October 17, 2003
RE: Draft document release

The public release on October 7, 2003 of the draft California Water Plan has caused great concern for members of the agricultural caucus. Many have invested over two years of their time developing this update of the Water Plan. To have released it publicly before significant and meaningful comments from members were incorporated into the document demonstrates disregard for the effort expended and for prior commitments made by you and other DWR staff to the Advisory Committee.

The agricultural caucus feels the following specific points address our concerns:

- Advisory Committee was never apprised that a press release would be made despite a prior commitment from DWR to notify the Advisory Committee of pending press announcements
- The first public draft was not scheduled to be released until December 31, 2003. What was the purpose of releasing an incomplete draft on such a short time schedule? It was the agricultural caucus' belief that Advisory Committee input would be incorporated into the version scheduled for release. This is an ongoing problem that has not yet been resolved.
- The release of an incomplete version led to an October 8, 2003 Sacramento Bee article that incorrectly implies that the Advisory Committee is in agreement, except for the storage issue. The article leads readers to believe that a so-called "soft path" approach to water supply is sufficient to meet the State's future water supply needs. There is significant disagreement on the Advisory Committee on this issue. The draft does not supply the technical estimates on future water needs which are required by law and which would provide a technical basis for resolving the disagreement, nor does it address how the plan will be implemented. Furthermore, the published due date of October 17, 2003 to submit comments did not give the stakeholders and especially the public enough time to read and submit thoughtful comments.
- The report text is not well written for the broad audience. Certain sections and paragraphs need to be rewritten for clarification and consistency and are not ready for publication beyond the Advisory Committee.
- Important comments submitted to staff were not included in the draft. DWR needs to include the comments or inform the caucuses as to why the comments were not considered.

It is the hope of the agricultural caucus that this misstep does not cause irreparable damage to the process so that all Advisory Committee members can move forward in completing their work and DWR can release a meaningful document.

In addition, the agricultural caucus requests an updated schedule of dates for submission of comments and the date when those comments would be expected to appear in the next draft document.

* John Mills, Joe Lima, Alex Hildebrand, John Hewitt, Bill DuBois, Todd Manley, Jim Snow, BJ Miller, Mike Wade, Anisa Divine, Lloyd Fryer, Michelle Dias, Nancy Pitigliano, Valerie Nera, and Brent Graham.